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CIA man doused at MSU debate

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A spokesman for the Central Intelligence Agency was literally doused with about a quart of whitewash by an editor of an alternative newspaper Monday evening at Michigan State University during a debate with two faculty members.

John M. Maury, now retired from the agency, was uninjured by the incident and continued with the debate unflustered.

After a brief, glum silence he looked away from his attacker's direction and went into a story ending with the punch line "Even Jesus Christ couldn't get 12 without one s.o.b." He drew a round of applause.

THE WHITE-WASHER, Lawrence Tharp, mid-Michigan editor for the Michigan Free Press, had been questioning Maury about the CIA "covering up" its activities around the world.

Tharp said the Vietnamese had been tortured and thrown out of helicopters as part of the Phoenix Program which Maury characterized as an attempt "to neutralize the Viet Cong infrastructure."

Responding to Tharp, he said "a lot of other people (besides the CIA) were operating in the military situation. This is not the way a professional would operate."

THARP CALLED Maury's entire presentation a "white-wash," then took a few steps toward the stage from the press table nearby and doused the white-wash from a plastic container.

Following the debate, Tharp was taken into custody by MSU police when they questioned him and he was unable to produce identification. He was released later that night.

Maury said he had no intention of filing a complaint. "I don't want to make a hero out of him, and I don't want him to make a hero out of me."

said the former agency station chief from Greece and the Soviet Union.

However, if the university initiated proceedings for disturbance of the peace, he said he would testify if summoned.

"IT DEMONSTRATES a point, a significant point from the student's perspective, they can see the type that is attacking the CIA," Maury said afterward.

Not all of the audience was in Maury's corner, however. A young woman gave a statement following the incident, saying that Maury was guilty for the killing and torture in Chile, following the coup against Allende in Chile in 1973 which the CIA helped bring about. She drew a lesser but sustained applause.

Later, as the debate ended and portions of the crowd milled about the auditorium, associate professor of criminal justice Zolton Ferency berated the action saying, "You created a lot of sympathy for that guy." Ferency and economics professor C. Patrick Larowe had spoken against the CIA in the debate.

"WHY DO people clap for him," someone from the small remaining crowd asked Ferency in a perturbed voice.

"They were clapping for the first amendment," Ferency blurted back.

The debate was sponsored by the

MSU Great Issues Series and the Associated Students of Michigan State University's legal cabinet, had begun as an inquiry into the relation of academic and the CIA, but soon broadened its scope.

THE TOPIC was chosen in part, according to Jim McAdams, director of the legal cabinet, because of campus concern about the multi-million dollar project by the university in Brazil. The project is funded by the Agency for International Development which has had CIA connections.

MSU was also involved in a training program for South Vietnamese police training in the 1960s. And overall, intelligence sources have estimated as many as 2,000 scholars at 300 academic institutions work for the agency.

Maury said the CIA had no involvement with the Brazil project, as university administrators have indicated. But he added the CIA may routinely seek information from Americans travelling abroad and from foreigners travelling in the U.S.

"I THINK intelligence is like sex," said Maury. "It's appropriate when conducted by consenting adults."

Maury said there were affinities between the agency and the academic community. "We need the cooperation of academic persons," said Maury who maintained "there is not a single

discipline or area of major interest the agency is not involved with."

Larowe maintained that any faculty member working with the CIA should sever his academic connections during that period. Ferency, said that each individual had to consult his own conscience.

LAROWE ALSO said that he had been approached several years ago to undertake a two-year project in Chile to discourage Communists from joining unions there. Larowe said his sympathies were the exact opposite and "Cornell got the project."

Questioned about the propriety of the CIA's covert actions abroad, Maury continually shifted the blame to Congress, and the President and the National Security Council.

"Who decides to take on projects? It's the National Security Council. And all of the money is appropriated by members of Congress in particular. In the last analysis it's you who elect the representatives of the country," said Maury.

Ferency lambasted that idea calling it "the most distorted view of criminal law I ever heard." Then he amended his remarks to "the second worst. The most distorted was Nuremberg."

"The agency owes it to us to obey the law. The CIA has a responsibility